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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/887,703	03/29/2001	Joseph L. DiCesare	03141 - P0349A	3422
24126	7590	11/12/2003		
ST. ONGE STEWARD JOHNSTON & REENS, LLC			EXAMINER	
986 BEDFORD STREET			SNAY, JEFFREY R	
STAMFORD, CT 06905-5619			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1743	

DATE MAILED: 11/12/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/887,703	Applicant(s) DICESARE ET AL.
	Examiner Jeffrey R. Snay	Art Unit 1743

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 03 September 2002 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 - a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) <u>08292001</u> .	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

- (a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.
- (b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

3. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to

consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Double Patenting

4. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-16 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 6 and 11 of U.S. Patent No. 6,548,018. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the instant claims are fully encompassed by the patented claims.

5. Claims 1-5 and 9-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being clearly anticipated by applicant's admission of the prior art.

Applicant admits at pages 31-32 and 37 of know, commercially available materials which meet the presently claimed characteristics. Because the intended use of such material is not germane to determination of patentability of the material per se, applicant's claimed medium is fully and clearly anticipated by the noted admission of identical commercially available materials identified as Merocel CF200 and CF50.

Regarding instant claims 9 and 11-16, it is noted that the additionally recited features are presented as intended use only. Specifically, claims 9 and 11-16 recite only intended functions to be performed by the medium without imparting any further structural limitation beyond the parent claim. While claim 10 does recite further structural characteristics attributed to the claimed material, such characteristics are anticipated by the admitted, commercially available material as disclosed at pages 31-32 and 37 of the specification.

6. Claims 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over applicant's admission of the prior art.

Applicant's claimed medium differs from the admitted material only in that it specifies a particular size and shape. However, absent some particular functional capability attributed to such dedication of size and shape of an article, any modifications are considered merely aesthetic and obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

7. Claims 1, 3, 4, 9 and 11-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Rosenblatt ('728).

See particularly examples 1-4 of Rosenblatt disclosing a surgical sponge comprising the same material as presently claimed. Rosenblatt further teach the use of such material as a swab (column 1, lines 14-20).

8. Claims 2, 5-8 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rosenblatt.

The claimed material differs from that of Rosenblatt in that it specifies particular characteristics including density and absorptive capacity. However, Rosenblatt teach that such characteristics are controllable in the method of formation of the material and disclose the same purposes of optimizing absorptive capacity and efficiency with respect to material weight. Thus, the presently claimed characteristics would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in order to optimize a particular application. The presently recited size and shape (instant claims 6 and 7) would have been obvious to the skilled artisan in view of Rosenblatt as such geometry would have been customary in the formation of the material into a swab (column 1) or a tampon (column 9, line 11). Furthermore, the application of an adhesive, recited in instant claim 8, would have been obvious in light of Rosenblatt's teaching of formation of either a swab or tampon in order to enable a support or string to the disclosed absorptive material.

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The remaining prior art cited and not relied upon is considered pertinent as general background information related to applicant's field of endeavor.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeffrey R. Snay whose telephone number is (703) 308-4032. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill A. Warden can be reached on (703) 308-4037. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.



Jeffrey R. Snay
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1743

jrs